First Regular Session Seventy-second General Assembly STATE OF COLORADO

REREVISED

This Version Includes All Amendments Adopted in the Second House

LLS NO. 19-0272.01 Brita Darling x2241

SENATE BILL 19-003

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Senate Committees

House Committees

Education Appropriations

Education Appropriations

A BILL FOR AN ACT

101	CONCERNING THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORCE	GIVENE	SS	PROGRAM TO	o
102	ADDRESS EDUCATOR SHORTAGES,	AND,	IN	CONNECTIO	N
103	THEREWITH, MAKING AN APPROPRIAT	ION.			

Bill Summary

(Note: This summary applies to this bill as introduced and does not reflect any amendments that may be subsequently adopted. If this bill passes third reading in the house of introduction, a bill summary that applies to the reengrossed version of this bill will be available at http://leg.colorado.gov.)

The bill makes changes to the teacher loan forgiveness program, renaming it the educator loan forgiveness program (program) and revising the eligibility criteria for the program.

The program:

Repays up to \$5,000 of qualified educational loans for up

HOUSE Reading Unamended April 18, 2019

HOUSE 3rd Reading Unamended April 19, 2019

SENATE 3rd Reading Unamended March 22, 2019

> SENATE Amended 2nd Reading March 21, 2019

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. <u>Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.</u>

Capital letters or bold & italic numbers indicate new material to be added to existing statute.

Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

to 5 years for teachers and other educators employed in qualified positions under the program; and

! Targets teachers and other educators employed in hard-to-fill positions due to geography or content area.

The department of education (department) is required to annually identify the content shortage areas that qualify for the program.

Subject to available appropriations, the Colorado commission on higher education (commission) shall approve up to 100 new participants in the program each year, and the bill specifies the criteria the commission shall use to prioritize applicants, if necessary.

The program includes the educator loan forgiveness fund, and the commission shall adopt policies that ensure that loan repayment is made only on qualified loans for educators in qualified positions.

The commission shall prepare an annual report for the general assembly that includes information concerning the content shortage areas identified by the department and information concerning the program participants.

The bill extends the repeal date of the program.

1 Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Colorado: 2 **SECTION 1.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, add 23-3.9-100.2 as 3 follows: 4 23-3.9-100.2. Legislative declaration. (1) THE GENERAL 5 ASSEMBLY FINDS THAT: (a) COLORADO SUFFERS FROM A SHORTAGE OF TEACHERS AND 6 7 OTHER EDUCATORS DUE TO VARIOUS FACTORS AFFECTING THE TEACHING 8 PROFESSION, WHICH INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO DECLINING 9 ENROLLMENT AND COMPLETION OF EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAMS, 10 LOW EDUCATOR COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS, AN INSUFFICIENT NUMBER 11 OF EDUCATORS IN CERTAIN CONTENT AREAS, AND DIFFICULTY IN FILLING 12 EDUCATOR POSITIONS IN RURAL OR ISOLATED AREAS OF THE STATE; 13 (b) PURSUANT TO HOUSE BILL 17-1003, ENACTED IN 2017, THE 14 DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF

EDUCATION, WITH INPUT FROM EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY

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1	STAKEHOLDERS, ANALYZED TEACHER AND OTHER EDUCATOR SHORTAGES
2	AND ISSUED A REPORT INCLUDING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADDRESSING
3	THESE SHORTAGES;
4	(c) AS PART OF THEIR FINDINGS, THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER
5	EDUCATION AND THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DETERMINED THAT THE
6	STATE HAS EDUCATOR SHORTAGES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION;
7	SCIENCE; MATHEMATICS; WORLD LANGUAGES; SPECIAL EDUCATION; AND
8	ART, MUSIC, AND DRAMA;
9	(d) FURTHER, SHORTAGES IN THESE CONTENT AREAS ARE MORE
10	PRONOUNCED IN RURAL AND REMOTE RURAL AREAS WHERE SCHOOL
11	DISTRICTS AND RURAL SCHOOLS FACE ADDITIONAL CHALLENGES,
12	INCLUDING INADEQUATE TEACHER COMPENSATION, LACK OF AFFORDABLE
13	HOUSING, AND AN INABILITY TO ATTRACT NEW TEACHERS TO RURAL
14	COMMUNITIES; AND
15	(e) The department of higher education and the
16	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOUND THAT ONE STRATEGY FOR
17	ADDRESSING TEACHER AND OTHER EDUCATOR SHORTAGES IN
18	HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS DUE TO TEACHING CONTENT AREA OR
19	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION IS TO OFFER LOAN REPAYMENT OF EDUCATIONAL
20	LOANS FOR EDUCATORS WHO SERVE IN THESE HARD-TO-FILL POSITIONS IN
21	THE STATE.
22	(2) THEREFORE, THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY DECLARES THAT
23	IMPLEMENTING A LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM FOR EDUCATORS
24	EMPLOYED IN QUALIFIED POSITIONS IN THE STATE IS NECESSARY TO
25	ENSURE THAT THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS ARE MET IN ALL COLORADO PUBLIC
26	SCHOOLS.
27	SECTION 2. In Colorado Revised Statutes, 23-3.9-101, amend

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1	(4) and (5); repeal (3.5); and add (2.5), (3.7), and (6) as follows:
2	23-3.9-101. Definitions. As used in this part 1, unless the context
3	otherwise requires:
4	(2.5) "EDUCATOR" MEANS A TEACHER, PRINCIPAL, OR SPECIAL
5	SERVICES PROVIDER, AS THOSE TERMS ARE DEFINED IN SECTION
6	22-60.5-102; EXCEPT THAT A SPECIAL SERVICES PROVIDER NEED NOT BE
7	EMPLOYED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT.
8	(3.5) "High-poverty school" means a public school at which the
9	number of pupils enrolled who are eligible for free lunch pursuant to the
10	provisions of the federal "Richard B. Russell National School Lunch
11	Act", 42 U.S.C. sec. 1751 et seq., is at least equal to or greater than
12	twenty-eight percent of the school's student enrollment.
13	(3.7) "QUALIFIED LOAN" MEANS AN EDUCATIONAL LOAN INCURRED
14	WHILE COMPLETING AN APPROVED EDUCATOR PREPARATION PROGRAM, AS
15	DEFINED IN SECTION 23-1-121, OR A BACHELOR'S OR MASTER'S DEGREE IN
16	THE AREA IN WHICH THE EDUCATOR IS EMPLOYED IN A QUALIFIED
17	POSITION. THE COMMISSION SHALL DETERMINE IF A LOAN IS A QUALIFIED
18	LOAN FOR PURPOSES OF THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM
19	CREATED IN SECTION 23-3.9-102.
20	(4) "Qualified position" means:
21	(a) A teaching HARD-TO-STAFF EDUCATOR position in a
22	high-poverty school that is a Colorado elementary public school in a
23	RURAL SCHOOL OR rural school district or in a facility school that is in a
24	rural school district identified by the department of education
25	PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.9-102 (6); or
26	(b) A teaching HARD-TO-STAFF EDUCATOR position in math,

science, special education, or linguistically diverse education in a

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Colorado public school, A SCHOOL OPERATED BY A BOARD OF
COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF TITLE 22,
or a facility school IN A CONTENT SHORTAGE AREA IDENTIFIED PURSUANT
TO SECTION 23-3.9-102 (6).

[5] "Rural school" OR "RURAL SCHOOL district" means a PUBLIC

- (5) "Rural school" OR "RURAL SCHOOL district" means a PUBLIC school OR SCHOOL district that does not include within its geographic boundaries a municipality exceeding five thousand persons and that is characterized by sparse, widespread populations IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 23-3.9-102 (6).
- (6) "SCHOOL" OR "PUBLIC SCHOOL" MEANS A PUBLIC SCHOOL AS PROVIDED IN SECTION 22-1-101, INCLUDING A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY A SCHOOL DISTRICT PURSUANT TO PART 1 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF TITLE 22, AN INSTITUTE CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZED BY THE STATE CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE PURSUANT TO PART 5 OF ARTICLE 30.5 OF TITLE 22, OR A SCHOOL OPERATED BY A BOARD OF COOPERATIVE SERVICES CREATED AND OPERATING PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 5 OF TITLE 22.
- **SECTION 3.** In Colorado Revised Statutes, **amend** 23-3.9-102 as follows:

23-3.9-102. Educator loan forgiveness program - administration - fund - eligibility. (1) (a) The general assembly hereby authorizes the commission to develop and maintain a teacher AN EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program for implementation beginning in the 2001-02 2019-20 academic year for payment of all or part of the principal and interest of the educational QUALIFIED loans of a first-year teacher AN EDUCATOR who is hired for a qualified position. Beginning in the 2004-05 academic year, the commission is authorized to extend the teacher loan forgiveness pilot program to include payment of all or part

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of the principal and interest of the educational loans of a teacher who is hired to teach in a qualified position after the teacher's first year of teaching. MONEY IN THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS FUND, CREATED IN SUBSECTION (1)(b) OF THIS SECTION, MAY BE USED ONLY FOR repayment of QUALIFIED loans through the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program. may be made using moneys in the teacher loan forgiveness fund, created in paragraph (b) of this subsection (1), or moneys allocated to the program by collegeinvest. The commission is authorized to receive SEEK, ACCEPT, and expend gifts, grants, and donations for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program. Only graduates of institutions of higher education whose loans have collegeinvest eligibility may receive repayment of their loans using moneys allocated to the program by collegeinvest The COMMISSION SHALL TRANSMIT ALL MONEY RECEIVED THROUGH GIFTS, GRANTS, OR DONATIONS TO THE STATE TREASURER, WHO SHALL CREDIT THE MONEY TO THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS FUND, CREATED IN SUBSECTION (1)(b) OF THIS SECTION. THE COMMISSION SHALL DEVELOP LOAN REPAYMENT POLICIES THAT ENSURE THAT MONEY IN THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS FUND IS USED FOR THE REPAYMENT OF QUALIFIED LOANS OF EDUCATORS EMPLOYED IN QUALIFIED POSITIONS.

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(b) There is hereby created the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness fund, which shall consist CONSISTS of all moneys MONEY appropriated thereto TO THE FUND by the general assembly for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program and any gifts, grants, and donations received for said THAT purpose. Moneys MONEY in the fund are hereby IS continuously appropriated to the department of higher education for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program. At the end of any fiscal year, all unexpended and unencumbered moneys MONEY in the

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1	fund shall remain therein REMAINS IN THE FUND and shall not be credited
2	or transferred to the general fund or any other fund; EXCEPT THAT ON
3	$A \hbox{\it u}\hbox{\it u}\hbox{\it u}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it u}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it u}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it d}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it d}\hbox{\it e}\hbox{\it e}$
4	FUND SHALL BE TRANSFERRED TO THE GENERAL FUND.
5	(c) SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE APPROPRIATIONS, THE COMMISSION
6	SHALL ANNUALLY APPROVE APPLICATIONS FOR UP TO ONE HUNDRED NEW
7	PARTICIPANTS IN THE EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM. IF MORE
8	APPLICANTS APPLY THAN THE NUMBER OF NEW PARTICIPANTS AUTHORIZED
9	FOR THE APPLICABLE YEAR, THE COMMISSION SHALL:
10	(I) FIRST, APPROVE APPLICANTS WHO HAVE CONTRACTED FOR A
11	QUALIFIED POSITION IN A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OR RURAL SCHOOL AND
12	IN A CONTENT SHORTAGE AREA;
13	(II) SECOND, APPROVE APPLICANTS WHO HAVE CONTRACTED FOR
14	A QUALIFIED POSITION IN A RURAL SCHOOL DISTRICT OR RURAL SCHOOL;
15	AND
16	(III) THIRD, APPROVE APPLICANTS WHO HAVE CONTRACTED FOR A
17	QUALIFIED POSITION IN A CONTENT SHORTAGE AREA.
18	(2) In addition to any qualifications specified by the commission,
19	to qualify for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program, a
20	teacher AN EDUCATOR shall:
21	(a) Graduate from an approved program of EDUCATOR preparation
22	PROGRAM, AS DEFINED IN SECTION 23-1-121, OR, IF THE APPLICANT IS A
23	SPECIAL SERVICES PROVIDER, SATISFY THE SPECIAL SERVICES PROVIDER
24	PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE;
25	(b) Meet licensure requirements pursuant to section 22-60.5-201
26	(1)(b) or (1)(c), SECTION 22-60.5-301 (1)(a) OR (1)(b), or SECTION
27	22-60.5-210; C.R.S.;

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1	(c) (1) Demonstrate professional competencies consistent with
2	state board of education rules in the subject matter in which the teacher
3	EDUCATOR obtains a qualified position; or
4	(II) Be fully qualified under a training program approved by a
5	federal court or agency or the state department of education;
6	(d) (I) Contract for the teacher's first year of teaching in a
7	qualified position, as defined in section 23-3.9-101, (4)(b), no earlier than
8	June 2001 2019 and no later than the end of the 2008-09 2027-28
9	academic year; or AND
10	(II) If the teacher is not a first-year teacher, contract to teach in a
11	qualified position, as defined in section 23-3.9-101 (4)(b), no earlier than
12	June 2004 and no later than the end of the 2008-09 academic year; or
13	(III) Initially apply to participate in the program and teach in a
14	qualified position, as defined in section 23-3.9-101 (4)(a), on or after June
15	1, 2005, and no later than the end of the 2012-13 academic year;
16	(e) Work at least half-time in a qualified position if employed in
17	a rural school district, or, beginning with the fall semester of the 2005-06
18	academic year, full-time in a qualified position if employed in a school
19	district other than a rural school district; and
20	(f) Be liable for an outstanding balance on a collegeinvest
21	QUALIFIED loan. or a loan through a lender with an agreement with
22	collegeinvest to offer loans.
23	(3) A teacher AN EDUCATOR who qualifies under PURSUANT TO
24	subsection (2) of this section may be eligible for up to two FIVE thousand
25	dollars in loan forgiveness for the first year of teaching EACH YEAR OF
26	EMPLOYMENT in a qualified position and up to two thousand dollars in
27	loan forgiveness for each of the next three years of teaching in a qualified

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position FOR UP TO A TOTAL OF FIVE YEARS.

- (3.5) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (3) of this section, a teacher who qualifies under subsection (2) of this section, initially applies to participate in the program in any of academic years 2009-10 to 2012-13, and teaches in a high-poverty elementary school in a rural school district shall be eligible for up to four thousand dollars in loan forgiveness for each of the first two years of teaching in a qualified position and up to one thousand dollars in loan forgiveness for each of the next two years of teaching in a qualified position.
- (4) If a teacher AN EDUCATOR qualifies for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program through employment in a high-poverty elementary school in a rural school district QUALIFIED POSITION and in a subsequent academic year the school no longer meets the criteria to be classified as a high-poverty elementary school in a rural school district POSITION IS NO LONGER IDENTIFIED AS A QUALIFIED POSITION PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (6) OF THIS SECTION, the teacher EDUCATOR may continue to participate in the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program if he or she THE EDUCATOR continues to teach at the IN THE same school POSITION IN THE SAME LOCATION OR IN A DIFFERENT POSITION THAT IS A QUALIFIED POSITION.
- (5) If a teacher AN EDUCATOR qualifies for the teacher EDUCATOR loan forgiveness pilot program through employment in a high-poverty elementary school in a rural school district and subsequently transfers to a nonqualifying school POSITION, he or she THE EDUCATOR forfeits participant status under PURSUANT TO this section.
- (6) (a) FOR PURPOSES OF DEFINING A "QUALIFIED POSITION" PURSUANT TO SUBSECTION (4) OF THIS SECTION, the department of

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1	education shall annually identify: the public schools in the state that
2	qualify as high-poverty elementary schools in
3	(I) Rural school districts BASED ON THE GEOGRAPHIC SIZE OF THE
4	DISTRICT AND THE DISTANCE OF THE DISTRICT FROM THE NEAREST LARGE,
5	URBANIZED AREA;
6	(II) RURAL SCHOOLS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED
7	TO INDIVIDUAL SCHOOLS OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT EVEN THOUGH THE
8	SCHOOL DISTRICT AS A WHOLE IS NOT IDENTIFIED AS A RURAL SCHOOL
9	DISTRICT IF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION DETERMINES THAT, AS A
10	FUNCTION OF GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS, THE SCHOOL IS
11	EXPERIENCING EDUCATOR SHORTAGES THAT ARE NOT EXPERIENCED BY
12	OTHER SCHOOLS OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT;
13	(III) CONTENT SHORTAGE AREAS, WHICH MAY INCLUDE THOSE
14	IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND
15	DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THEIR NOVEMBER 2017 REPORT,
16	"COLORADO'S TEACHER SHORTAGES: ATTRACTING AND RETAINING
17	EXCELLENT EDUCATORS", AS WELL AS OTHER CONTENT SHORTAGE AREAS
18	SPECIFIC TO COLORADO THAT DEVELOP OVER THE COURSE OF THE
19	EDUCATOR LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM. THE DEPARTMENT OF
20	EDUCATION MAY IDENTIFY CONTENT SHORTAGE AREAS GENERALLY AND
21	FOR SPECIFIC GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF THE STATE.
22	(IV) HARD-TO-FILL EDUCATOR POSITIONS DUE TO GEOGRAPHY OR
23	CONTENT SHORTAGE AREA, OR BOTH.
24	(b) AS PART OF ITS ANNUAL IDENTIFICATION OF RURAL SCHOOLS,
25	SCHOOL DISTRICTS, AND CONTENT SHORTAGE AREAS, THE DEPARTMENT OF
26	EDUCATION SHALL CONSIDER EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER
27	FEEDBACK.

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1	SECTION 4. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 23-3.9-103
2	as follows:
3	23-3.9-103. Reporting. NOTWITHSTANDING THE PROVISIONS OF
4	SECTION 24-1-136 (11)(a)(I) TO THE CONTRARY, on or before December
5	15, 2002 2019, and on or before each December 15 EACH YEAR thereafter
6	IN WHICH AN EDUCATOR IS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM, the
7	commission shall prepare an annual report that includes, but is not limited
8	to, THE CONTENT SHORTAGE AREAS IDENTIFIED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF
9	EDUCATION; THE NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AND the number of
10	participants in the program AWARDED LOAN FORGIVENESS, THE PUBLIC
11	SCHOOLS IN WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS ARE EMPLOYED, AND DEMOGRAPHIC
12	INFORMATION FOR THE PARTICIPANTS; THE APPROVED TEACHER
13	PREPARATION PROGRAM ATTENDED BY THE PARTICIPANTS; AND the
14	amount of funds MONEY applied toward loan forgiveness and the sources
15	of those funds the money. The report must also include, for all
16	PARTICIPANTS AWARDED LOAN FORGIVENESS, THE LENGTH OF TIME EACH
17	PARTICIPANT HAS REMAINED IN THE PROGRAM AND HAS REMAINED
18	TEACHING IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE SAME SCHOOL DISTRICT.
19	The commission shall provide notice to the education committees of the
20	senate and the house of representatives, OR ANY SUCCESSOR COMMITTEES,
21	that the report is available to the members of the committees upon
22	request.
23	SECTION 5. In Colorado Revised Statutes, amend 23-3.9-104
24	as follows:
25	23-3.9-104. Repeal of part. This part 1 is repealed, effective July
26	1, 2019 SEPTEMBER 1, 2033.
27	SECTION 6. Appropriation. (1) For the 2019-20 state fiscal

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1	year, \$623,969 is appropriated to the department of higher education for
2	use by the Colorado commission on higher education. This appropriation
3	is from the general fund. To implement this act, the commission may use
4	this appropriation as follows:
5	(a) \$123,969 for administration, which amount is based on an
6	assumption that the department will require an additional 1.4 FTE; and
7	(b) \$500,000 for student loan repayments.
8	SECTION <u>7.</u> Safety clause. The general assembly hereby finds,
9	determines, and declares that this act is necessary for the immediate
10	preservation of the public peace, health, and safety.

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